

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (original): A rubber composition comprising 100 parts by mass of a rubber and 0.1 to 100 parts by mass of carbon fibers as a filler which are produced by a vapor phase epitaxial growth method and respectively include one or more bottomless cup-shaped carbon network layers, wherein the respective carbon network layer in the form of stacked cups have a large diameter portion whose end face is exposed onto a periphery of the carbon fiber.
2. (original): The rubber composition according to claim 1, wherein said filler includes the carbon fibers produced by a vapor phase epitaxial growth method which respectively include a plurality of the bottomless cup-shaped carbon network layers stacked on each other.
3. (original): The rubber composition according to claim 2, wherein said carbon fiber has a knotless (bridge-free) hollow shape.
4. (original): The rubber composition according to claim 3, wherein the hollow carbon fibers include a hollow portion having outside and inside surfaces onto which end faces of the carbon network layer are exposed.

5. (original): The rubber composition according to claim 4, wherein 2% or more of the end face of the carbon network layer which is located on the outside surface of the hollow portion of the carbon fiber, is exposed thereto.

6. (currently amended): The rubber composition according to claim 4 ~~or 5~~, wherein the exposed end face of the carbon network layer has irregularities on a scale of atomic level.

7. (currently amended): The rubber composition according to ~~any of claims 1 to 6~~claim 1, wherein the carbon network layer remains ungraphitized even when it is heat-treated at a high temperature of 2,500°C or higher .

8. (currently amended): The rubber composition according to ~~any of claims 1 to 7~~claim 1, wherein the carbon fibers have diameters of 1 to 1,000 nm and lengths of 0.1 to 1,000 μm .

9. (currently amended): The rubber composition according to ~~any of claims 1 to 7~~claim 1, wherein the carbon fibers have diameters of 5 to 500 nm and lengths of 0.5 to 750 μm .

10. (currently amended): The rubber composition according to ~~any of claims 1 to 7~~claim 1, wherein the carbon fibers have diameters of 10 to 250 nm and lengths of 1 to 500 μm .

11. (currently amended): The rubber composition according to ~~any of claims 1 to 10~~claim 1, further comprising a filler other than the carbon fibers in an amount of 1 to 60 parts by mass.

12. (original): The rubber composition according to claim 11, wherein the filler other than the carbon fibers is carbon black and/or an inorganic filler.

13. (currently amended): A tire using the rubber composition as claimed in ~~any of~~
~~claims 1 to 12~~claim 1.

14. (new): The rubber composition according to claim 5, wherein the exposed end
face of the carbon network layer has irregularities on a scale of atomic level.